

5 Episodes in the life of Simon Peter

5 Steps in the Making of a Christian

1. Matt. 4: 18-20. "Jesus called out, ^{Follow} (Come with) me." Reality in Religion

The making of a Christian begins with a meeting with Jesus. Other religions emphasize man's long search for God. That happens - but the making of Peter begins with God calling him - not his looking for God.

This is the beginning of a great experience with Jesus. Better even than fishing. "They left their nets and followed Him."

2. Matt. 14: 25-23. Reality + Limitations of Miracles

The making of a Christian rises to unimagined heights. It is wonderful. It has Peter, in the next episode, walking on water. But immediately, we are reminded that the real life has its failures too. Peter begins to sink.

Why did Peter fail. Because he ~~took~~ ^{had} his eyes ^{too much} ~~partly~~ on himself ^{or himself} (there's an element of "look me, no hands"), and not enough on his Lord. And also because he had his eyes too much on the storm. "When he looked and at the high waves, he began to sink." The Christian must keep his eyes on Jesus Christ.

3. Matt. 26: 69-75. Reality of Failure in the Christian Life

But there is even more failure in his life. This next episode is one of the most tragic in the Bible. Peter, who said, "I'll never fail you - denies his Lord three times - and just when Jesus needs him most. "Peter began to curse & swear. I don't even know the man," he said. And that, too, is a Christian's, Peter's, life.

The Reality of Hope. Peter had failed; the Lord dead.
Luke 24. The Empty Tomb

Peter finds the Empty Tomb.

The Reality of Restoration
John 21. He meets the risen Lord.

Peter is the answer. Or rather, to make it clearer, perhaps, I'll say the answer to the question about people who feel lies in the difference between Peter and Judas.

Both failed.

Judas made the wrong response. He went out and hanged himself. Some kno I know keep hanging themselves on their guilt. But that's the wrong answer.

Peter made the right answer. You can take these passages and divide it into parts.

- ① He wept. He didn't say - "Well, everybody fails. I'll just have to try harder next time." He wept. He was genuinely covered a song.
- ② He confessed. All the commentators agree that the story about Peter's denial at the house of Caiphas, comes from Peter himself. He didn't try to hide his failure. He confessed it.
- ③ He looked for the Lord. When the women came back with the wild story - it's only Peter (with John) who go out to look for him.
- ④ The Lord finds him. I Cor. 15:5. tells us Peter was the first to whom the Lord appeared.
- ⑤ The Lord restores his confidence, his peace.
- ⑥ The Lord puts him to work.

The Bible answer to failure - is always resurrection! There's no restriction in that it.

Further. The Lord lives. He is alive.

Do you love me more than these —

Peter - blustering Peter, no pretensions —

Solution 3. Humility.

Jesus asked ^{the} "more than these" — Peter doesn't dare compare himself with the Apostles.

But he knows he loves Jesus — and he trusts Jesus to know it too — You know.

Feed my lambs — not degraded for his fall —

Given fresh charge, new commission.

He has denied three times — he must three times affirm his love.

Solution 1. - Invertebrate.

John 24. Peter believed — only he went out to see.

The rest refused to believe the women.

Peter "the fluttermouth" done is on his way to becoming a rock" — Barclay.

Matt. 4:18-20. "He did not ~~stop~~ lay aside his nets — but changed them" Any. Inl Bib.

14-25-33. Why did Peter fail?

"Because when his venture began, he had his eyes partly on Peter & partly on Xt., and because as the venture continued he began to look at the storm, rather than at Xt. "When he saw the wind, he was afraid" — says Bible.

This is Peter's story in a nutshell. Confides. Fails. Redemption's salvation by Jesus.

26: 69-75. Peter himself, most scholars agree — must have told this story. "And that fact does him honor." (In.B).

Solution 2. Confess.

"He was wiser than Judas. He wept. Made confession, and fled peace."

Solution 4. Christ.

Our failure is never the last word — the last word is Christ's.

PETER

Alexander Findlay, ^{begins} in his Portrait of Peter with a reference to an allusion by his brother comparing the church to a Gothic cathedral. The western window is Paul, the eastern John, but all the aisles meet in Peter, the prostrate man, and from Peter the main tower rises to the sky." (p. 11)

Mark's gospel, suggests Rufinus (Euse. III, 39), in his remembrance of St. Peter's missionary preaching:

J. Alexander Findley begins his Portrait of Peter

I suppose that is true, but I don't particularly like it. It sounds a little too Roman Catholic, and to be honest, I am afraid that it is precisely this prejudice that keeps Peter from being my favorite apostle. I am a Protestant, and if Protestantism has a patron saint among the Apostles, it is not Peter but Paul - ~~Paul~~ ^{Paul the convert,} is my own favorite - Paul the deacon, ^{Paul the convert,} Paul the theologian, Paul the ~~main~~ foreign missionary - not Peter, loveable, ~~the~~ "quaint" old slipper Peter. I don't like to see Paul side-tracked into a Western window - while all roads lead to Peter, as all roads lead to Rome. And it irks me to have the chd described as rising "from Peter" as a "main tower... to the sky." He is a crumbling kind of a rock, indeed, on which to build the church. He is not my favorite.

And yet our Lord, who knows the heart of man far better than we, chose ~~Peter~~ Simon, the Son of John, and called him Peter, the Rock, and in a sense which we cannot deny, built His Church upon him.

- ① ~~It is~~ Peter ~~the~~ is the leader of the 12 - not James, John, Paul.
- ② Peter is the leader of the Chd, which the 12 led after Pentecost. When Paul wants to join that chd, he comes to "interview Peter" (Gal. 1:18)
- ③ Peter is the leader of the Church's world mission. That too was built on him - and even Paul the greatest missionary of them all never claimed to be more than building on other men's foundation.

~~These are~~

This is the Peter I want to speak of tonight - three Peters, really:
① the Peter of the Gospels, the disciple of Christ; the Peter of Acts the first 5 chapters of the Book of Acts - the leader of the church; and the Peter of Acts 9:32-¹²~~34~~, the leader of the mission. There is, of course, a fourth Peter whom we must also note ④ The Peter of the Roman church.

I. The Peter of the Gospels - leader of the 12.

But first the Peter of the Gospels - "Peter", of course, is not his name. It is his title. His name is Simon, the son of John, a fisherman who, ^{like}~~with~~ his brother Andrew, ^{was}~~was~~ either a partner, or more probably, hired man in the employ of Zebedee, a fairly well-to-do owner of a fleet of fishing boats on the Sea of Galilee. He fished naked, bare-chested in the sun - a peasant, forgotten on the very outer edge of empire. Even James and John were higher in the social scale than he - all knew it, as their later demand for top seats in heaven indicates. But, ^{when} Jesus picked ~~Peter~~ out from the rest of his 12, he chose three ~~of~~ out from the rest as an inner circle - ^{James, John, & Peter.} 3 times he called the three apart: ① at the healing of Jairus' daughter,

- ② at the transfiguration, ^③ and at Gethsemane
- ① the healing of Jairus' daughter
- ② the transfiguration
- ③ Gethsemane -

James, and John and Peter - that was the inner circle, and the leader of them was Peter. "In 'the glorious company of the Apostles,'" says Fundlay, Peter is first. His two companions James and John were attractive boys; he was a man." (p. 74). What laid of a man ~~did Jesus see in this~~ was he,

That in the name of this fisherman bishops would tremble, and knigs be crowned, and whole continents be cut in two.

It has been suggested that Peter's whole life can be summed up in two searchy glances from the eyes of Jesus. Twice the gospels pause ~~specifically~~ to ~~single out~~ for mention ~~as~~ a detail of Jesus' life with his disciples that must have occurred every day; twice, the record says, Jesus "looked on" Peter.

The first time is at the first meeting, at the Jordan: "Jesus looked upon him and said, 'Thou art Simon, the son of John: thou shalt be called Cephas (Rock)'. "

In that look Jesus saw in this uneducated, impulsive fisherman, ~~a lot more than who became his~~ a lot more than most people do.

The main reason we like Peter is that he is anything but a rock. He is just as weak and unstable and unreliable as we are - he is completely human. We love him for his faults. At least one Bible scholar calls this name of him as Rock - a joke. And

G. K. Chesterton says Jesus calls Peter the Rock because he is a splendid specimen of "the ordinary man" - as common as the lava-rock of the Galileean countryside.

But Jesus looked at Peter, and saw a rock - not yet visible to others - but it was there. And Peter looked at Jesus and left all to follow him!

One of the reasons Paul is my favorite is that his kn experience is so clear-cut. It fits in with my own theology - He's a sinner, against God. He's converted - he becomes a kn. He obeys God's call - and becomes a missionary. Three ~~clear-cut~~ concrete ~~events~~ periods - Jerusalem, Damascus, Antioch. But Peter - he completely blurs the picture for me - and reminds me to be a little more humble about my theology.

Will one of you tell me when Peter was converted?

As second look

- ① When he left all - John 1: 40, 42.
- ② When he wept bitterly. Luke 22: 61. (Repentance precedes...)
- ③ At Pentecost.

I'm not sure - perhaps it was neither one of the three - perhaps it was when, as Paul declares (I Cor. 15: 5), he became the first man to see the Risen Lord. There is a change in his life there somewhere - and in his 1st Epistle, (1: 3) he suggests that the new birth was the result of the resurrection -

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy we have been born anew to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." "Exegesis for Peter," exp. Findley (p. 253f.) "dated from Easter Sunday."

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The Rock

Peter (Petros - person)

Jesus chose him as leader of the 12.

Chief of apostles in founding the 1st Church as principal leader in earliest preaching of Gospel to the Gentiles.

} Peter, of course, is not his name. His title.

His shadow heals (even the shadow of Peter passing by) - Acts 5:15.

"Of the religion of St. Peter it may be said that its outward manifestations in the world are the Church and its theology; and that the one is connected with the name of Peter, the other with that of Paul." - p. viii.

He learned to be great by the faults into which his impulsiveness led him... - in the fisherman in an obscure part of the world - but in his name Peter claimed to rule the world - above Kings & Emperors.

- Peters:
- 1) Peter of the Gospels - disciple
 - 2) Peter of early church tradition
 - 3) Peter of Acts - leader
 - 4) Peter - the ideal Bishop
 - 5) Peter of St. Paul's epistles
 - 6) Peter - of the Papacy

Impious to John & James? A partner in crime - but the debt belonged to Zebedee, John's father.

First to see the Risen Lord - 1 Cor. 15:5; ~~but~~ Luke 24:34

Jesus' first miracle - healing Peter's mother-in-law.

Mark 8:29: 'Thou art the Christ' - has words found the 1st religion, for 'Jesus is the Christ' is the first creed of the church. Came at a time of failure - when J. was driven out of Galilee into the semi-heathen tetrarchy of Philip - to the east of Jordan. (p. 62)

Is Peter the Rock of the Church? Augustine, in his Retractions not sure. Christ is the Rock. Not a Protestant view only. (68)

(Proverbs - Jackson)

"Feed my sheep" (John 21) - Peter is made the pastor (Paul was the preacher) - and

Peter's was the higher honor.
I. Disciple - "The only disciple who plays an active part in the ministry of Jesus on earth" - p. 129
Incidents: ① Peter falling at Jesus' feet, "Depart from me for I am a sinful man, O Lord." (Lk. 5.8)

② "attempts to walk on water; crying out in fear." (Matt 14:29)

③ "declaring as a matter of course that Jesus would pay Temple tax" (Matt 17:24)

④ "confessing J. as X^t, then instantly renouncing with him" (Mt. 26:33)

⑤ "at Caesarea - pretended not with anything to say - the way being."

⑥ "refusing to let J wash his feet." (Jn. 13.6-1)

⑦ "denying X^t."

⑧ "summoned to court, first to enter" (Jn. 20)

II. Peter as leader of Church.

1. First 5 chapters of Acts - Peter is the only speaker for the Church

a. Pentecost sermon: exposition of 3 O.T. passages - Joel 2:28-32; Ps. 104:1-4; Ps. 118:1 - prophesied the coming of Jesus.

No reference to his acquaintance with Jesus. Peter is here a theologian, not the impulsive friend of Jesus.

2. Acts 13 - Cornelius - Peter breaks thru the walls of Judaism and brings the Gospel to the outer world ^{Acts 10}

But from here on he ceases to be the central figure. Interest shifts from Jesus to Antioch.

a. Peter's arrest - Acts 12 - James is now head of Jesus' community; Peter goes to another place.

→ "Of Peter as a missionary the only facts we know are that he was accompanied by his wife, and supported by his converts..." p. 130 (cf. Luke 22:28, 29; 1 Peter 1:1)

① Peter 1:1 also indicates he preached first in Asia Minor

3. Legend - Peter as bp. of Antioch. ∴ assoc. with three early international sees (Rome, Antioch, Alexandria - then his disciple Mark) - ecclesiastical authority seems to have come from all directions - Peter.

A. Findlay, A Portrait of Peter.

Paul is not typical - "the kind of religious genius who appears only once in many generations". Moreover he was an enemy. Few of us have been active enemies. Christ's mission.

Peter comes from Bethsaida - a large town (large fishing) on the east bank of the Jordan just north of the S. of Galilee.

I. First met Jesus in Galilee where they had gone to be baptised by John Bapt. (John) Peter was - a name probably hired man - of Zebedee father of James + John - also expected quantity.

Two looks: searching glances - when he met people in whom he was interested, a steady gaze -

John 1: 40, 42 - Jesus looked upon him & said, Thou art Simon the son of John: thou shalt be called Cephas (Peter).

Luke 22: 61 - And the Lord turned & looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord how he had said to him, "Before the cock crows this day, thou shalt deny me thrice."

Not impulsive - but has a habit of being a reminder of Jesus, happens at the conversation - then says in later words - justice a subject which has already been passed.

Mat. 28: 15 f. Forgiveness - prayer, fellowship - Peter comes with him in words

Mat. 19: 27 Peter says to Jesus - "We have left all."

John 13: 33 - Jesus - "I call others no." - Peter says - "where are you going?"

G.K. Chesterton - Jesus calls Peter the Rock because he is a splendid specimen of the ordinary man - as common as rocks and pebbles.

II. Second meeting - Jesus comes north - Peter then follows him. On the following sabbath Jesus makes his first public appearance in the Synagogue - called "the sabbath school" - he sits in a high place where he reads in his speech of Isaiah - "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me..."

Friday - 2

The inner circle - Peter, James & John: -

- On 3 critical occasions -
- ① raising of James' daughter
 - ② Transfiguration
 - ③ Gethsemane.

In "the glorious company of the apostles," Peter is first. "His two companions James & John were attractive boys; he was a man." - p. 74

Peter walking on the water - "an outline (in parable form) of the course of Peter's assoc. with Jesus in the days of his flesh."

They were in 2 diff. worlds - Jesus expects God to work thru the 12

The 12 expect God to come in and make the world over in their ideals.

Peter bec. rock - bec. he left his world of that behind & went to live with Jesus in His world.

Soon got out of his depth - but his collapse gave Jesus no trouble. 12 months later again came near sinking - but that was bec. he had followed further than the others.

Only 2 tried to follow Jesus to the Cross -

Thomas - called the doubter - "Let us go that we may die with Him"

Peter - "Why cannot I follow Thee now?" - earlier, at confession.

Pioneers of the Primitive Church - Filson

Peter - "the patron saint of all those of us who must take the painful trail back from defect and failure." - p. 28.

Primacy of Rome est. at 4th Council Chalcedon (451) under Leo Great.

When Eastern Ch. under Dioscorus, ^{Pap.} ~~Arch.~~ of Alexandria, dispute Leo's settlement of questions & 2 returns of Xt., - Council strips Dioscorus by authority of the archbishop of the great and elder Rome, who then us and thus the holy synod now present, together with... the Apostle Peter who is the Rock, has stripped Dioscorus of his dignity."

Ecumenical (John the Foster, rival of Gregory the Great, declared himself, as Bp. of Corinth, to be Ecumenical Bishop) p. 233

Peter + missions to England. Early churches named in his honor.

Legend - Ethelbert of Kent dies, 616 - successors apostatize - Archp. Laurentius prepares to flee. Peter appears in vision - beats him - induces him to stay to guard his flock. p. 241.

Council of Whitby, 664, settled for Rome vs. Celts by appeal to Peter. p. 246 f.

Peter, kindly. Pope Leo III, at end of 8th c., accused by enemies of many crimes. Offers to purge himself by declaring innocence at tomb of St. Peter. Not allowed. Peter too kindly - might overlook perjury. Pope could not be hunted until he had sworn an oath at St. Peter's - "sterner + more formidable saint" - 257.

Appearance - bald and gray - in almost all pictures.

Peter - as N.T. priest. Heb. suggests its essence is sympathy (4:15). Peter = good type. 255

Peter - Foakes-Jackson

III Peter and Paul.

Gal. 2:1-10. Peter's and Paul's gospel is different. Paul rebukes Peter for Judaism: —

Peter, pioneer to Gentiles, deserts them at Antioch under pressure from Jerusalem? (p. 99-100)

Jerome was first to perceive disagreement betw. Pet. & Paul - considers it "staged" for teaching purposes.

Augustine disagrees - considers this imputation of treachery.

The affair at Antioch too slight a foundation for theory of hostility. Acts shows conciliation & respect.

IV. I Peter.

Canonical - among 1st books recognized - Gospels, Ep. of Paul, I Peter, I John.

Purpose - hortatory, not doctrinal. Chief interest: an effort to create a Xn moral code - brotherly love, humility, forbearance. Peter was: leading exponent of this new ethic.

V. Mark - which reads like the shorthand account of an impromptu speaker, with all the repetitions, redundancies and digressions which are characteristic of living speech" (Streeter, 4 Gospels, 63) - may be the record of Peter's actual preaching. "Mark my son" - I Pet. 5:13.

VI. Peter at Rome? (Legend says he lodged with Prisca + Aquila on the Aventine - 294) - in A.D. 42.

- a) I Peter written from Babylon (Rome, Babylon - or Bab. in Egypt) c) Ignatius - no direct ref to Peter in Rome, tho he is about to die there.
- b) I Clement - no real indicators - 96 AD
- d) Justin Martyr silent about Peter

e) Irenaeus - first direct mention of Peter as founder. AD 178 - apostolic succession "Nothing has survived to Eusebius - Peter was crucified head downwards." connect Peter with Rome till we come to the days of Irenaeus" - p. 210.

VII Primacy of Peter. Significance of promise to Peter not noticed till middle of 3rd c.

- 1) N. of Origen or even Cyprian - claim greater priority than other Apostles. To them Peter was not Bp. of Rome esp. (223)
- 2) 363 - in Donatist controversy - Optatus vs. Parmenian insists that since P. is not in communion with Rome he is not in the Church which Xp founded - for that was founded on Peter (the Bp. of Rome).

Peter rapidly replaces Paul in saint-worship, & foundation of authority - e.g. Innocent I; Leo the Great superior (225)